IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re PATENT APPLICATION of

SPEAR et al. Group Art Unit: Unknown

Appln. No.: 08/982,694 Examiner: Unknown

Filed: December 2, 1997

FOR: PORTABLE STACKABLE HOSE CART ASSEMBLY
[M# 243755, DKT NO. 51]

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February 23, 1998

PATENT SEARCH STATEMENT, INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT, AND DISCUSSION OF PATENTS MOST CLOSELY RELATED TO SUBJECT MATTER OF CLAIMS

Hon. Commissioner of Patents
and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

Sir:

The undersigned hereby states that a pre-examination search was made for prior art relevant to the claimed subject matter of the above-identified application in Class 137, Subclass 355.27. Additionally, a computer search has been made on the Dialogue® computer data base.

The references developed as a result of the search efforts are listed on the form PTO-1449 filed herewith. The references deemed most closely related to the subject matter encompassed by the claims of the present application are discussed in detail below.

This Information Disclosure Statement is intended to be in full compliance with the rules, but should the Examiner find any part of its required content to have been omitted,

prompt notice to that effect is earnestly solicited, along with additional time under Rule 97(f) to enable Applicants to comply fully.

Consideration of the foregoing and enclosures plus the return of a copy of the herewith Form PTO-1449 with the Examiner's initials on the left column per MPEP 609 along with an early action on the merits of this application are earnestly solicited.

The Applicants wish to point out that the subject matter of the present application is related to the subject matter of commonly assigned U.S. Appln. of Spear et al., Ser. No. 08/724,668.

The present application includes claims 1-23, of which claim 1 is independent.

Claim 1 recites a host storage device comprising a supporting frame structure. The supporting frame structure is constructed and arranged (1) to be nested on top of a similar supporting frame structure and (2) such that a similar supporting frame structure can be nested on top of the supporting frame structure. A hose reel structure has a hub structure constructed and arranged to receive a length of hose coiled thereon. The hose reel structure has generally circular end flanges on opposite sides of the hub structure and is rotatably mounted on the supporting frame structure.

The structures have upwardly facing supporting surfaces constructed and arranged to support a similar hose storage device stacked on top of the hose storage device in a nesting relation wherein a similar supporting frame structure of the similar hose storage device nests on the supporting frame structure and upper portions of the circular end flanges are disposed in transversely offset and overlapped relation with lower portions of similar generally circular end flanges of the similar hose storage device. The structures have downwardly facing stacking surfaces constructed and arranged to engage similar upwardly facing supporting surfaces of a similar hose storage device when the hose storage device is stacked on top of the

similar hose storage device in a nesting relation wherein the supporting frame structure nests on the similar supporting frame structure of the similar hose storage device and lower portions of the circular end flanges are disposed in transversely offset and overlapped relation with upper portions of the similar generally circular end flanges of the similar hose storage device.

U.S. Patent No. 5,425,391 discloses a hose storage device having a folding handle and a hose reel structure with oblong end flanges which permit stacking of multiple units. The irregular shape of the oblong end flanges, however, makes it difficult to roll or unroll a length of hose. Lateral movement of the hose when unrolling it can cause the hose to extend over the shortest side of the oblong end flange. The hose can then become entangled with the higher side of the end flange and prevent or impede rotation of the hose reel. This situation does not occur with the generally circular end flanges of the present invention because the edge of the flange is the same distance from the hub structure surface at any given point. The oblong end flanges, however, are vital to the '391 hose cart because the carts will not stack upon each other without rotating the oblong end flanges to a predetermined position. (See Figure 6).

Furthermore, when the hose carts disclosed in the '391 patent are stacked on top of one another the end flanges thereof are aligned above one another. Claim 1, however, recites a hose cart assembly having upwardly facing supporting surfaces constructed and arranged to support a similar hose storage device stacked on top of the hose storage device in a nesting relation wherein a similar supporting frame structure of the similar hose storage device nests on the supporting frame structure and upper portions of the generally circular end flanges are disposed in transversely offset and overlapped relation with lower portions of similar generally circular end flanges of the similar hose storage device. Also, the structures have

downwardly facing stacking surfaces constructed and arranged to engage similar upwardly facing supporting surfaces of a similar hose storage device when the hose storage device is stacked on top of the similar hose storage device in a nesting relation wherein the supporting frame structure nests on the similar supporting frame structure of the similar hose storage device and the lower portions of the circular end flanges are disposed in transversely offset and overlapped relation with upper portions of similar generally circular end flanges of the similar hose storage device.

The remaining references are no more pertinent than the '391 patent and are illustrative of the general background of the art.

Therefore, it is submitted that claim 1 defines a new and non-obvious combination of components which is neither taught nor remotely suggested in the prior art. Further, the combination cited by claim 1 achieves particular advantages not afforded by the hose cart assemblies disclosed in the prior art. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is in a condition for allowance.

The remaining claims are dependent upon claim 1. These dependent are submitted to be patentable for the reasons advanced above with regard to claim 1 for the additional reason that they each recite additional patentable features of the invention defined by claim 1.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and a Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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